they presented themselves with iron doors and a gang of bricklayers, Messrs. Spence and Co. were not bound to admit them. They would shut their doors against the intruders, and therefore the builders ought not to be called on to accomplish an impossibility or be imprisoned.

Mr. Mountague said that was no fault of his. He must take the law as he found it. He was a public officer, and through him the official referees must maintain their authority. They called upon him to do his duty, and he therefore prayed that the nuisance might be abated. The payment of the fees was a distinct matter. This complaint of being out of time came most ungraciously from Mr. Young, after obtaining repeated adjournments to get the opinions of counsel, &c.

Mr. Young said all the adjournments had reference only to the demand of the expenses of reference. The case of the builders had never been adjourned. The summons now before the magistrate was an original complaint, and therefore out of time.

Mr. Alderman Sidney said the Buildings Act was a blundering affair, and the attempt to mend it last session had been given up. As enough had been done by issuing a distress warrant to raise the question, and there would be no failure of justice from refusing the present application, he and his brother magistrate concurred in dismissing the summons, on account of the lapse of time in making the complaint. They did this without meaning in the least to blame Mr. Mountague for the course he had taken or the temper he had shewn.

Mr. Young begged to say Mr. Mountague had performed his duty in a very courteous manner.

THE VALUE OF MODERN WORKS.

REFLECTIONS ON ARCHITECTURE, AND NOTES ON BUILDINGS IN LIVERPOOL.

In writing these memoranda on works in Liverpool, we have been much impressed with a conviction which we deem sufficiently important for present notice. That opinion has been, probably in a great measure, arrived at, from the attention which THE BUILDER has of late given to the want of a prescribed and systematic education for the young architect, the consequence of this want being, that the attention of students is absorbed in some one department of the study, which has to fit them for the practice of architecture, and which department, although important enough not to be neglected, is yet not sufficiently so—the main object of the student's course of instruction, and the public want of professional assistance being considered—as to render it politic to withdraw any attention whatever from studies, which are, perhaps, less enticing and conducive to immediate fame, but which no architect can dispense with. It will not be thought, that we could ever recommend the student to hold even the mere literary and historical departments of architecture, as accomplishments which might be done very well without; still they are not the only or the most important consideration, and there have been clever men and great architects, who have not known every thing that "architecture" includes, or, who have been skilled in only one branch of the *art*. Whether that individual may be entitled to the credit of skill in architecture, who has mastered the grammar of Italian or Gothic architecture, as he may be held to be or not, according to the opinions of advocates of each considered system, is, at least, a less sufficient reason for ascribing such an attribute, than would be his possession of knowledge of the science of construction and practice of building, and capability of imparting beauty to the forms originating in fitness or convenience. Every style practised by any nation of the earth—if affording matter for criticism at all, as more than curious construction, or hand-work—has shewn itself a medium for the production of beauty of design.

It is, perhaps, less necessary to insist that the scientific and practical departments of architecture require the attention both of student and architect, than to urge the complete revisal of the method by which the ability to practice the profession is expected to be attained. It will for more tend to subsequent profit, and the early and complete possession of indispensable knowledge, to consider what are the different departments of education, and to advance each during the most important years of life, than to devote those years to some one branch, postponing other branches to a period when they may indeed be supplied, but then with immense trouble and incidental loss. If our student readers are employing their time in gaining a knowledge of art in celebrated works of architecture, and in endeavouring to penetrate the principles which guided the selection of details, they may rely, that far from that time being misspent, they are acquiring important, indeed, necessary information. But they must not allow their attention to be confined to these. The different branches of education should be followed by them, we believe, somewhat *pari passu*, to fit them for the duties which, progressively, they must undertake.

It is no doubt highly interesting to examine into the workings of the artists' minds in times which have now the charm of antiquity, and to gain the lessons which those times can teach, and still valuable would these be, if merely provocative of that enthusiasm which should characterise the architect. But there would be error in considering that architecture is wholly fine art. It is at least as important to consider and study the different methods of construction which may now be applicable to a building, and valuable even to notice the working of the mind of the modern architect. —The end of our argument, therefore, is to urge the frequent observation of works in progress, as one of the most important aids to architectural knowledge.

Indeed, all architects require a constant cultivation of the observing faculty, in order to preserve readiness of adaptation in details of construction to requisite ends. The opinions, and even the mistakes of those of their own time, are valuable in suggesting their own line of thought and action, and more so because they *are* those of contemporaries. Such notice is often interfered with by the necessity for attending to matter of more pressing importance, but should never be considered as unnecessary, unless it be useless to preserve that activity in resources and suggestions, which is required in the age.

It is to be wished that the habit of writing down impressions were more general. Architects are much inclined to be critical, yet apart from the inherent difficulty of architectural criticism, and the abstruseness of its principles, so confessed by even the real thinkers, the solution of many of the questions which make up the great variety of contradictory opinions, is indefinitely postponed, by reason of the impossibility of arriving at real argument, where each would be incapable of understanding his own professed opinions, and of advocating them. When each of us is fairly committed to some one of the opinions—upon the question of style, for instance,—something really important will have been gained towards the settlement of that troublesome question.

But the present object is less to carry out these incidental arguments to the point to which they might possibly lead, than to record a few notes of matters of art and construction in Liverpool. Judging from such streets as we were able to look into, enough has been done in this town within about the last five years to afford much matter for thought. We cannot look at the Town Hall and Exchange buildings, which used to be considered remarkable works of architecture, then at the buildings lately erected, without feeling that there is really much ground for hoping that architecture will again have vigorous existence. Something may be detected of the same want of careful design which rendered the work of Stuart and Revett so great a blessing to the architects of another order and school, and we can often think more of the talent of the architect whose work may be full of questionable features, than of his whose work has indeed no point to catch at for blame, but none for praise.

> "——— in such lays as neither ebb nor flow,
> Correctly cold, and regularly low,
> That, shunning faults, one quiet tenor keep:
> We cannot blame indeed—but we may sleep."

Without entering into the question of originality in that day or this, architects of the Italian school formerly had manifestly a small number of the resources possessed by those of our own day. We do not speak of Jones, Wren, Hawksmoor, Burlington, Vanbrugh, Talman, Chambers, and others, men capable of producing works that would be honourable to any age and country, but we rather contrast the ordinary municipal buildings of a town by artists, who may be considered respectively as not amongst the one or two architects of highest repute in either age. We say then, that whilst in the one case we have usually a common arrangement of well known orders, joined to one understood variety of rusticated basement, in the modern building we find real design. In the Liverpool Town Hall, there is some attempt at ornament, but it appears as if carved by a very unskilful hand, or as though designed by some one unable to draw. The buildings in Dale-street, nearly opposite, erected a few years since, notwithstanding some points which might be criticised, have very great merit in this particular. The ornament has a perfect character of unity of design in all its parts, true accordance with the Grecian principle out of which it has been educed, and yet is strikingly original, shewing how much may yet be wrought out of a style, in which it had been supposed by many there could be no further novelty. The ornament above the doorways in the court, may be instanced, and the whole has obviously been designed and drawn by some one who has had perfect command of his pencil.

The new building for the Assize Courts is another work, most creditable to the architect, and to the people of Liverpool, and is indeed a building of which the country may have reason to be proud. It occupies an immense space, and would, like the less important instances just given, lead us to think that we are only just beginning to discover the real value of Grecian architecture. Still it has some points which might be open to objection,—and we wonder there are so few, considering the difficulties to which the architect has been subjected, in endeavouring to make his design accord with the plans of others. The portico has, we might say, less of that importance which should characterize that feature when attempted in so large a building, only that we are mindful of the different effect which may be expected, when the steps and approaches are completed. It has, however, a great fault:—the line forming the apex of the roof breaks off abruptly at a short distance from the back of the pediment, always a most unpleasing feature, even to those unacquainted with architecture, but most remarkable in a building claiming to recognize the spirit of the Grecian style. Our attention had been directed, quite spontaneously, by a non-professional friend, to a more glaring example of this mistake in one of the largest buildings in Liverpool. Such an instance shews, that an architect may be perfectly familiar with the style he has chosen to adopt, and may even have personally investigated its examples, and yet from forgetfulness of some principles of design apparently simple, or from thinking rather of introducing some admired feature, than of taking those which would have appeared to grow out of the requirements of the building, may err, not only against principles which can be understood without much knowledge of architectural works, but even against those of the particular authorities which he had taken for his guidance. In saying this, we are not forgetting the supposed form of roof in the hypæthral temple.—In the end farthest from the portico, the architect of the Assize Courts has adopted an apsidal form, and this part of the building has great beauty. The accessories of steps and terraces, and the enclosed area in the middle of the street, judging from an engraving we have seen, please us as arguing a mind alive to the value of these important but much neglected features, upon which something has already appeared in these pages — under the head of "Leaves from an Architect's Diary." Nevertheless, the interruption of the attic for a short distance between the apse and the main building, though it appears to have been made with some judgment, seemed to us objectionable. And the use of square columns, which, though limited to a portion of the flank, form so important a feature in the effect and arrangement of the building, may be a point open to discussion. For ourselves, we have never been able to divest our sight of the bulky appearance which columns of this kind have when viewed obliquely, and they have been employed but

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